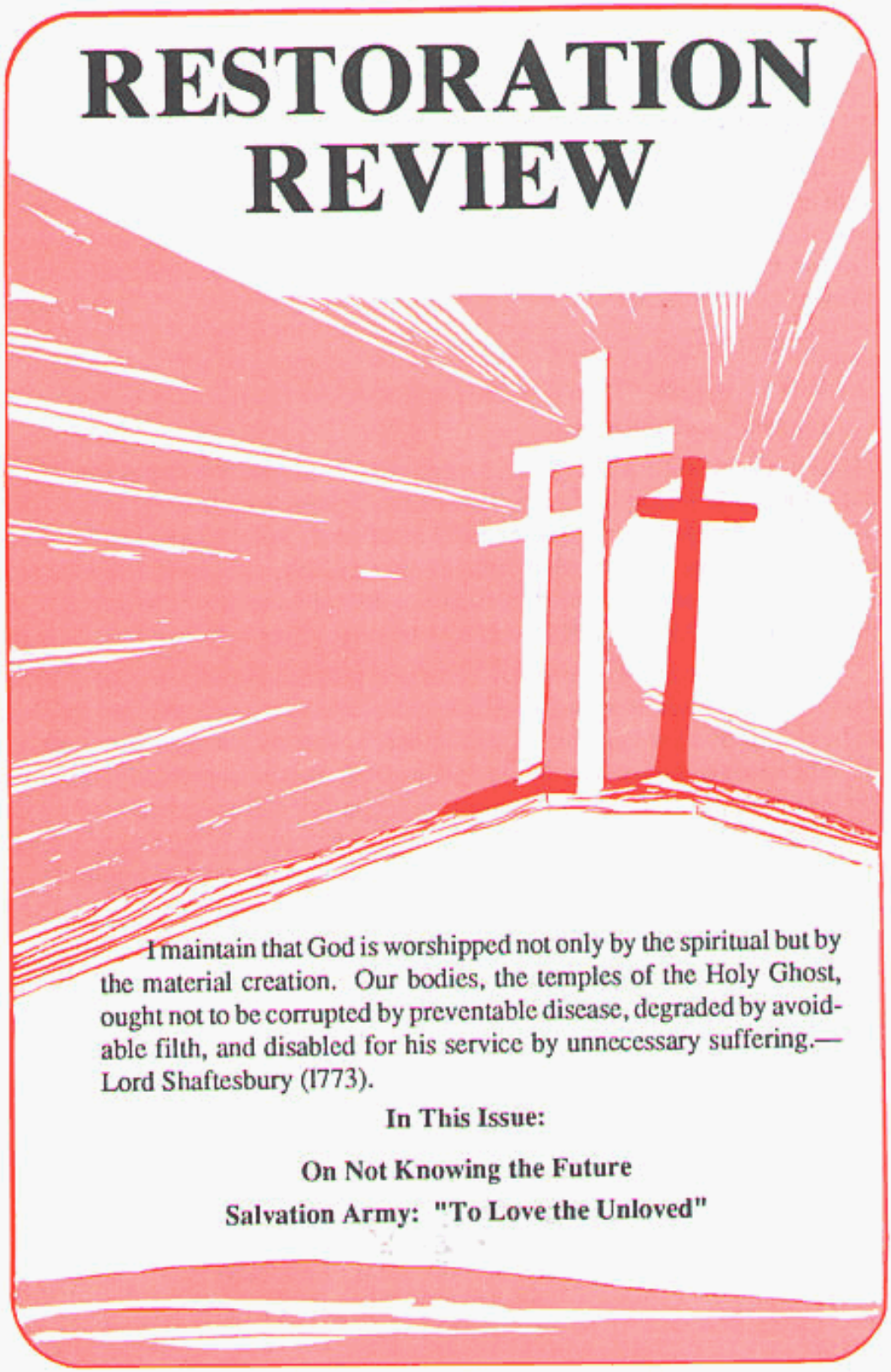
RESTORATION REVIEW



I maintain that God is worshipped not only by the spiritual but by the material creation. Our bodies, the temples of the Holy Ghost, ought not to be corrupted by preventable disease, degraded by avoidable filth, and disabled for his service by unnecessary suffering.—Lord Shaftesbury (1773).

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Restoration Review, Vol. 31, No. 10, December 1989

The Hope of the Believer...No. 10

ON NOT KNOWING THE FUTURE

God holds the key of all unknown, and I am glad. — Christian motto

It is a motto to be remembered and implemented. One of our temptations is to want to know the future, especially in times of crisis. The millions spent every year on seances, mediums, fortune tellers, and horoscopes witness to our curiosity about tomorrow. We are slow to learn what one brilliant thinker, James Montgomery (d. 1854) resolved long ago:

Tomorrow—oh, 'twill never be, If we should live a thousand years! Our time is all today, today.

It is just as well. It is in fact the mercy of God that we are spared knowledge of the future. We all soon learn that life can be brutal: the death of a mate, the loss of a child, a dreaded disease, the betrayal of a friend. But life would be more than brutal, it would be unbearable, if we knew these things in advance. Even the good things that come our way would lose some of their glimmer if we had prescience of them. Part of what makes life sweet is to be surprised by joy.

The classic example of one who to his own hurt had to know the future is King Saul. The Philistian army had found the one place where it could cross the plains of Judea all the way to the Jordan river without encountering mountains and thus use their dreaded chariots of war. When Saul realized that the huge enemy army could cut his country in two and hand him a devastating defeat, he was beside himself in an effort to find out from God what he should do. In those days God sometimes spoke directly to the king in a dream, sometimes it was through the priests in the rolling of dice called Urim and Thummim, and most often through a chosen prophet. Because of his own arrogance in wanting to be an absolute monarch and because he had disobeyed God, King Saul could not communicate with God in any of these ways. He had insisted on being on his own, but now that he was in serious trouble he had to have help. He was very human, even like us, wasn't he?

It was all right for Saul to seek help, but he went too far. He sought to invade the realm of the dead and to trifle with the unknown. He sought out a medium or a witch, a profession that he as king had tried to eliminate from the land of Israel, this being one instance in which he

obeyed God. But now that he was desperate the king had to talk with the deceased prophet Samuel, so he promised the witch protection if she would bring up Samuel. The witch of Endor thus becomes one of the Bible's most eerie characters. Even though Saul had disguised himself, the witch somehow recognized him as the king once she had brought up Samuel from the dead. When Samuel appeared on her crystal ball, it frightened her and caused the king to prostrate himself.

It is not clear whether this story, which is recorded in 1 Sam. 28, intends to tell us that it is possible to communicate with the dead, as Saul did with Samuel, or whether sorcery is here pictured as a fake as witnessed by the witch's surprise at her success. The latter may be the case since the witch is put aside in the seance, once Samuel appears, and does not serve as the medium as the prophet and king proceed to talk directly to each other.

It is clear that Saul believed it possible to communicate with the dead, but he knew full well that it was against God's will. Hardly anything is more clearly condemned all through Scripture than communicating or trying to communicate with familiar spirits. And yet how presumptuous mankind has been in this regard all through history, even in the most enlightened nations! It must be due to man's fascination with black magic. (His excuse for playing with fire? It is just for kicks!) Man wants to be God, including having a knowledge of the future.

There are grim aspects to this story. Samuel appears as an old man wearing a robe (the way he was when he died?). He complains to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?," as if he had no control in the matter.

I can only conclude that this was more God's doing than the witch's, and that God was allowing the wayward king to have his way by allowing him to see what was in store for him in the immediate future.

It was a tragic experience for the king. Samuel reminded him of his disobedience to God and for this reason his kingdom would be torn from him and given to David, the very one Saul most feared and hated. Moreover the Philistines would defeat him in battle and he would soon be a dead man —"tomorrow you will be with me," as Samuel put it. By this time Saul, the great king, was prostrate full length on the ground, filled with fear. It is a sad story.

The story teaches us that it is just as well not to try to read the future or to second guess the God of heaven. It is better that we not know the future but that we take the days one at a time and live each one within the will of God, the best we can determine that will. And leave the future in God's hands. James Russell Lowell said it well in *The Present Crisis.*

Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown, Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

Are We To Know The Time of Christ's Return?

Recently I asked two of my friends, both learned men in the Scriptures, if they thought human history might continue for a long time yet, even another 10,000 to 20,000 years. Both of them conceded that it might be that we are but in the early stages of human history and that the era in which we now live might one day be ancient history. They see nothing in Scripture that necessitates our concluding that the end of time is imminent.

One of them noted that such a long view of history is consistent with the mercy and forbearance of God. God is so longsuffering and so eager to give sinful humanity every opportunity to turn to him that he is reluctant to bring things to an end. That at least is consistent with his nature.

I have other friends who are confident that the consummation of all things is at hand and that Jesus is coming soon. They do not of course claim to know the exact time and they do not set dates, but they believe there are signs that reveal the season of Jesus' coming, and those signs reveal that we are in the season, and so our Lord's coming is imminent. Such ones would be surprised, I suppose, if history went on for another century or two, or even another 50 years, much less another 20,000 years.

This view has its problems. The signs they point to seem to have been present for a long time, and for this reason there have been those all through the centuries that have insisted that the world was living at the brink of endtime. While the "Soon" coming of the Lord is Biblical (such as "Surely I am coming quickly" in the next-to-the-last verse of the Bible), we have no way of knowing how soon is soon. Those who first read those words from the mouth of Jesus back in the first century would probably have been surprised to be told that two thousand years would pass without his coming.

Those who are most insistent on the imminent coming of Christ are criticized for having an inadequate concern for the amelioration of social evils. If indeed one believes that Jesus' coming is at hand, he or she would not likely be interested in long range plans for human betterment. Efforts toward justice in Nicaragua and democracy in East Germany don't matter all that much if the end is only around the corner. If Jesus is coming soon why worry with rebuilding the nation's school systems? The urgent message thus becomes one of repentance rather than the improvement of society. They are also accused of having a pessimistic view of history and human progress. Things are not getting better but worse. There is little hope in their message and they are purveyors of bad news instead of good news.

But those who have a sense of urgency about the imminent coming of Christ nevertheless make a vital contribution to the church by not letting us forget that the second coming of Christ is a crucial part of Biblical teaching — and we are inclined to neglect it if not ignore it! Whether our Lord comes sooner or later (as we count time) is not as important as the truth that he *is* indeed coming. This is not only a fact of the gospel but it is our "blessed hope" according to Tit. 2:13.

But is it important that we know the time or even the season of our Lord's coming? It is a surprising fact that even Jesus himself did not know the time of his coming again: "But of that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Mk.13:32). It is best that we not know, for we can then be busy doing what faithful followers of Christ should be doing: redeeming the world and preparing for his coming. This is the best way for us to be "watching," which is a frequent admonition in Scripture, such as "Watch, therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming" (Mt. 24:42).

We watch, not so much by studying the calendar and looking for signs, but by being busy in things that really matter. Since life is so short we can look at this in two ways. We will be busy watching and preparing, if not for his coming to us, then for our going to him. If he comes while we are still in this world, that will be glorious. If he tarries for a very long time yet, that doesn't really matter all that much, for in that case we will be going to him, which will be equally glorious. And we must not overlook the possibility that God yet has a great deal planned for this world that will carry the human race far into the future. In that event we will be witnessing it all from another world as a part of God's family made perfect in heaven.

Either way we win. The victory is ours. But God's ways and God's thoughts are far beyond our tracing out. — *the Editor*

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SERVANTS OR SLAVES?

When I was a graduate student at Harvard my major professor, Henry J. Cadbury, was a member of the committee that translated the Revised Standard Version, along with such stalwarts as Edgar J. Goodspeed. In one of Cadbury's classes the meaning of the Greek word *doulos* was discussed, and the professor noted that it was the common word for slave in New

Testament times. One of the students, who was aware that the RSV committee had usually translated *doulos* as servant instead of slave, asked Cadbury why they did not translate the word according to its real meaning.

His answer startled me. "We did not have the courage," he said. He went on to say that the church was hardly prepared to accept the radical implication of the term slave, and so they followed other versions in using the more moderate term servant. Christians can accept the idea of being servants of Christ but not slaves of Christ.

And so the RSV, like most all translations, renders Ro. 1:1: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ" rather than "Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ." Likewise in Jas. 1:1 it is "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" instead of slave. In 2 Tim. 2:24 it is "The Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome" rather than the Lord's slave. In 2 Cor. 4:5 it is "your servants for Jesus sake" instead of "your slaves for Jesus sake," and in Rev. *19:5* it is "Praise our God, all you his servants" instead of slaves.

The word *sundoulos*, which means fellow slave, is treated the same way, as in Col. 1:7 where Epaphras is called "our beloved fellow servant" instead of a fellow slave. In Rev. 6:11 Christians are called "fellow servants" instead of fellow slaves.

On and on it goes, and the King James Version is worse than the RSV in avoiding the term slave. The KJV in fact translates *doulos* 127 times in the New Testament and never uses the word slave, which is really what it means. This led some naive social scientist, who relied only upon the KJV, to accuse the New Testament of ignoring the fact of slavery. Half of the world was in slavery and the New Testament does not even mention it, he charged. But that was because he was reading only of "servants" in the KJV. The New Testament actually refers to slavery in one way or another over 100 times.

To the credit of Cadbury and the RSV committee, they sometimes rendered *doulos* as slave, even as believers being slaves of Christ. This was when the context made it almost necessary, such as in 1 Cor. 7:22: "For he who was called in the Lord as a slave is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise he who was free when called is a slave of Christ." In Ro. 6:16-18 the RSV consistently renders *doulos* as slave: "Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness." To use slave here, as the translator should, gives deeper meaning to the text

But the KJV uses servant in these texts, which robs the verses of some of their pungency. And this is generally the way *doulos* is treated by most all versions whenever it appears in the New Testament. We are thus led to conclude that we are to be mere servants in our commitment to Jesus Christ, not the more demanding role of slave, a term that was "scorned and rejected" by the Greeks of New Testament times, to quote Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.*

The Stoics, who were probably the most religious among the Greeks in their worship of Zeus, would never refer to themselves as slaves of God or Zeus, for it was too demeaning. It is remarkable that Christ and the early church reached into the most deplorable dimension of ancient culture, even into the slave galley itself, to borrow a term that would represent the believer's relationship to God and Christ. There was of course one crucial difference. The slave, sold on the auction block for a price, was involuntarily chattel property, while the Christian is a willing slave to Christ. Indeed, the Christian believes that it is only as a slave to Christ that he or she is really free.

The reason Prof. Cadbury gave for not always translating *doulos* according to its true meaning is a stunning indictment of how the church has allowed itself to be hoodwinked by its Western culture. The RSV committee did not have the courage to give the word its full impact because it was persuaded the church would not or could not see itself as slaves. Servants, perhaps, but not slaves.

To recover the pregnant meaning of this term could radically change the way we see ourselves as Christians. A slave had no will of his own, for his relation to his master was such that his mind always was "Not my will but thine be done." He lived for his master, not for himself. He never saw his work for the master as ever completed or that he deserved any kind of thanks or reward. Even when he did all that was commanded of him, he was still unprofitable. He was in fact his master's, and not his own, for he had been bought with a price.

Kittel's tells us that the essence of being a *doulos* is being completely dependent. The slave looks to his master for all of his needs. He need have no anxiety over any crisis, for the master will see to it. He has only one thing to do and that is to yield himself totally into the safekeeping of his master.

It is in this light that we can better understand such verses as, "Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

You are not your own! That concept of voluntary enslavement draws the line between being a professed Christian and a real Christian. It means that we have a frame of reference far different from that of the world. When we are of the world we think in terms of self-interest; when we are of the we-are-not-our-own attitude we forget self and concern ourselves with the will of Christ. At heart we are to be martyrs for Christ, for our lives are not our own but his.

If indeed we think of ourselves as free men and women, we can heed the great truth of 1 Cor. 7:22: "He who is called while free is Christ's slave." — *the Editor*

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RENOVATORS, NOT INNOVATORS

Good works do not make a man good. but a good man does good works. —Martin Luther

A single line in a history book about the reformers that brought on the Protestant Reformation impressed me as especially poignant: "The Reformers were never innovators, as the papacy was so often to allege, but renovators." Not only does my reading about the Reformers persuade me that this is a correct assessment, but I believe this distinction should apply to the ongoing work of reform to which this journal is dedicated. We are to be renovators in the life of the church, not innovators. I will point to what this distinction means to me.

The history book I was reading noted that Wyclif, Hus, and Luther, to name three of the earlier reformers, did not bring in new material with which to forge the Reformation but rediscovered old truths and principles and gave them a new relevance. It was renewal through recovery. In their struggle for renewal they had to remove some of the innovations that the medieval theologians had imposed upon the church, but they were not themselves innovators. They did not impose new ideas, ordinances, and principles upon the church but uncovered old ones that reached back to Christ and the apostles. In order to do this they found new ways to express old ideas.

The above quote from Luther is an instance of this. The innovations that had been imposed upon the church through long years of legalistic tradition, from the doctrine of the superogation of works to the sale of indulgences, forced the conclusion that goodness is a matter of doing good. We become good by doing good works. Luther as a renovator recovered the doctrine of justification by faith, which is as old as the Scriptures themselves. It was the doctrine of justification by works, imposed by the monastic theologians, that was the innovation. Luther put an old doctrine in a new dress when he said "Good works do not make a man good, but a good man does good works." He was saying that we are not saved by good works, but when we are saved (1)y faith) we will do good works. Luther was saying that only Christ can make us good, and we are good only to the degree that Christ is within us. When we do good works, it is Christ doing it through us, for we have no goodness of our own. This is a great renovating truth, one that frees us from the innovation of law-keeping.

John Wyclif, who appeared on the scene almost two centuries before Luther, blazed the trail for the Reformation by challenging an array of innovations that had been invented by the medieval church. He opposed the doctrine of a special priesthood, insisting that all believers are priests, and that one does not have to have a priest to mediate with God for him. Each believer can go before God on his own behalf. Wyclif also challenged the doctrine of transubstantiation as a human invention. Moreover, he claimed that the church is made up of all God's chosen ones, not of a clerical hierarchy. He also was the first to translate the Bible into English, believing that anyone can understand the will of God by reading for himself.

While Wyclif escaped the Inquisition during his lifetime, the Council of Constance in 1415 condemned him as a heretic long after he was dead, and had his body disinterred from holy ground and burned. They would have called Wyclif an innovator, but they were the innovators, imposing as they did the doctrines of men upon God's people. Wyclif was a renovator in that he sought renewal by recovering truths as old as the Bible itself.

John Hus was influenced by Wyclif. He too opposed images and priestcraft, holding that only God can forgive sins. He condemned the sale of indulgences. He insisted that the Bible is the only authority in the church and Christ is its only head, contrary to the claims of the papacy. He emphasized personal piety and purity of life. This cost him his life. He died as a martyr in 1415. While he was condemned as a heretic, it was really his persecutors who were the heretics. Hus was a renovator who sought to restore ancient truths and practices to the church and to discard the hurtful innovations of the medieval clergy

Alexander Campbell saw himself as within the tradition of the Reformers. He insisted that he was introducing nothing new, and that everything he advocated was at least as old as the New Testament. This is why he saw his plea as catholic — a catholic faith, a catholic

table, a catholic name, a catholic baptism. That is, he was no innovator with a cache of new offerings. What he stood for were the old truths and ordinances of the church universal from its beginning.

This journal stands within that same tradition. I may seek new ways to express old truths, but I offer no new agenda. Some suppose that our plea for unity in diversity is a newly born heresy, but I have sought to show all these years that unity in diversity is the unity for which our Lord prayed as he turned his face toward the Cross. To whatever degree the early Christians were united it was a unity in diversity, for there is no other kind of unity except unity in diversity. The demand for unity by conformity is an innovation, born of sectarianism.

My position that fellowship is based upon the essentials of the faith and not on opinions, and that it is opinions that divide us, is nothing new. It is the teaching of Scripture.

My claim that the Church of Christ is made up of all those in Christ wherever they may be, including many in the various denominations, even when they are less than perfect and hold erroneous views, has been rejected by many as a modern heresy. The real heresy is for any religious group or sect to claim to be the totality of God's church on earth. Wherever God has a child I have a brother or sister. We are sisters and brothers, not because we agree on "the issues," but because we have believed in Christ and been baptized into him. When we act upon such simple New Testament truths as this we are renovators in that we are renewing and reinvigorating God's people.

Innovations are of course in order when they are merely new ways of doing old things or when they assist us in performing the basics of our faith. A church building is an innovation as are all these electronic devices we now use, such as this computer I am using. In the area of methods and opinions we may continually innovate, looking for better ways to do what we believe God wants us to do. It was so with Luther. The printing press was still new in his day, and he used it mightily in sending out his call for reform. It is conceded that the Reformation could not have happened without the printing press. In this respect Luther was an innovator, but in reference to the principles, ideals, and ordinances for which he pled, he was a renovator.

It is a distinction worthy of our awareness. We are of course to look for new and better ways to do things, but we need no new gospel or doctrine, nor any additions thereto. Innovators love new revelations but renovators are content to draw upon that faith once for all given to the church. Innovators want to change things by bringing something new, while renovators want to change things by recovering what is old. — *the Editor*

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UNITED IN CHRIST, DIVIDED AS CHURCHES

We, being many, are one body in Christ. - Rom. 12:5

Back in *1954* when the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches met in Evanston it chose the theme "Our Oneness in Christ, Our Disunity As Churches." It pointed to the fact stated in Rom. 12:5 that those who are Christians are one body in Christ, and yet they acknowledged that as they met as representatives of churches they were divided. United in Christ but divided as churches!

When it is put this way, one can appreciate what C. C. Morrison, founding editor of the *Christian Century,* said in response: If we are united in one body but divided as churches, then let us do away with the churches, and then we will be united and not divided. He was saying that we can do away with denominations, which stand as monuments of our divisions, and be left only with the Body of Christ, of which we are all "severally members one of another."

He was not being as naive and impractical as might appear. Traditions would continue even after the denominations were laid to rest, whether Lutheran, Calvinistic, or Anglican, so long as they were not imposed as conditions of fellowship and acceptance. Agencies, whether missionary or educational, would continue their work, but they would serve and be supported by the church at large, the only church there would be.

While it would be easier for congregations to merge, and there would be some of this, by and large they would continue meeting where they are now and would carry on the work they now do, though there would be much more cooperation. But they would no longer assemble as Baptist, Methodist, Church of Christ, Lutheran, etc., etc. churches. They would drop all such names, rejecting them as divisive.

The Hillcrest Baptist Church or the Riverside Church of Christ in a given city would become something like the Hillcrest Chapel and the Riverside Assembly, or, since a church building is obviously what it is, it would only be necessary to have a sign giving the time of services. It would not be any denomination, only one more assembly of the Body of Christ. It might follow a tradition somewhat different from other assemblies and the doctrine taught might vary some, but it would not be a separate church or denomination. People would continue to have their preferences, but they would not be divided into denominations. There would be only the one, universal church. There would be a common membership in that one

could move from one congregation to another and be accepted simply on the basis of being a Christian. We could also move toward a common ministry even though this might require more time, traditional preferences being what they are.

We might still differ on things like the Lord's supper and baptism, so each congregation would follow its own preference and tradition. These are differences that we could tolerate for the sake of unity, but no one would be expected to violate his or her conscience, and each congregation would practice and bear witness to what it believed. We would be united upon the basis of loyalty to Jesus Christ, allowing each person to follow Christ according to the understanding he has at the moment.

Some will say it is unrealistic to think in terms of the churches quit being churches. But if this is where we are divided, as the World Council concedes, we should call for an end to all churches, however unrealistic it may be. We must find the answer to our endless divisions which stand as an obstruction to our Lord's prayer for the unity of his people. If doing away with the denominations is the answer, let's recognize it and move in that direction, however long it may take.

It was this spirit of selflessness that gave rise to our heritage as Churches of Christ/ Christian Churches. When Barton W. Stone caught the vision of the unity of all believers, he realized that any sectarian body is a hindrance to that unity. He consequently resolved to do away with the little sect he had created and called the Springfield Presbytery. It was dissolved by a resolution of heart and a stroke of the pen. "Let this body die, and sink into union with the Body of Christ at large," he wrote. And it was done. Stone's labors may have eventually led to the formation of still another denomination, but that was not his intention. He had the right idea for bringing an end to divisions — do away with all the sects!

It will never happen, you may say. Not by our own power, no, but we must prepare ourselves in heart and mind to be used as instruments of God's power. The first step is for us to really have a passion for unity and to desire it more than we desire the existence of our own church. What might happen if many of us began to pray "Lord, let our own denomination die and become apart of the Body of Christ at large if this is what it takes for your people to be one"?

That is the real test as to whether we really believe in unity: Are we willing to say "Let this body die," and watch our denomination become a part of history? We would no longer be Baptists, Roman Catholics, or members of the Christian Church, but simply believers, followers of Jesus Christ together. "We, being many, are one body in Christ." That is all we would be! It is all we need to be! And when we are that and only that we cannot help being one in Christ! It is as churches that we are divided.

If we make this the desire of our hearts, it can happen in God's own time and in God's own way. — *the Editor*

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Visiting Other Churches: New Series, No.10...

SALVATION ARMY: "TO LOVE THE UNLOVED"

Love must not be a matter of words or talk; it must be genuine, and show itself in action. — 1 Jn. 3:18 (NEB)

This verse is a kind of motto of The Salvation Army, and it captures the spirit of this organization all the way back to William Booth who founded it in *1865.* Booth was a dedicated Methodist minister who started a mission for the wretched masses in the slums of London. When he was opposed by the established middle-class church, he resigned and started the first corps of what he eventually named the Salvation Army. Booth and his army declared war against sin, hunger, and degradation. Although they suffered abuse and death threats, they grew rapidly into a worldwide army. Today they serve in 91 countries speaking 121 languages. They have over 1,000 centers of operation in the U.S. and 14,000 worldwide. Since from the outset their aim has been to minister to the body as well as the soul, their mission has been described as "soup, soap and salvation."

Booth, who was authoritarian in his methods, gave his organization a quasi-military character. He named himself general. His ordained clergy, which from the beginning included women, were officers with the rank of either captain or major. Administrative leaders are colonels. Rank and file members are soldiers. Borrowing from the imagery of Scripture, Booth saw the church as an army at war against the sinful world. His magazine was called *The War Cry.* All members are encouraged to wear uniforms. They fly their own flag.

When you see a Salvationist (the term they use) in a uniform trimmed in red, you can know that he or she is an officer. A man and wife often work together, and they have the same rank, for when one gets a promotion the other automatically does. That should keep peace in the family! But the two draw but one paycheck. The workers are "adequately paid," as the Army puts it, but the incentive has to be a desire to serve suffering humanity. An officer is expected to marry another officer. If he doesn't, he must resign as an officer. Leaders are

trained for two years at Schools of Officers' Training, four of which are in the U.S. While officers serve as pastors of congregations, they are not selected by the congregation but by their superior officers.

The Army may be the only church (and they make it clear that they *are* **a** church) that has never made the slightest distinction between the sexes. Women do everything that men do and always have. The present general over the entire Salvation Army is a woman, who is by the way very impressive in her snow-white uniform with its touch of red. It was mostly women that brought the Army to the U.S., beginning in New York in 1880

Booth was a master communicator who was a pioneer in religious advertising. Unlike any other church of the 19th century, he was able to communicate with the poor masses of Europe. This was often resented, causing Booth and his officers (including women) to be terribly abused and persecuted. In 1882 alone 642 officers were assaulted and sixty Army buildings damaged. They were accused of catering to the whims of a jingoistic nation with their militaristic mien, and even the just Lord Shaftsbury saw the Army as the work of the devil that was making Christianity look ridiculous.

All that most of us see of the Salvationists is their presence on a street corner at yuletide with their famous "Christmas kettle," soliciting donations for the poor by blowing horns and clanging cymbals. While a high percentage of the soldiers do have musical skills and use them in fundraising, their ministry is much more far-reaching than what the public sees during holiday season. Their theme of "People Helping People" is expressed in many ways. They have day care centers that serve 26,000 children in the U.S. each year. They have l7l self-contained mobile canteens that serve in times of disaster. In the event of floods, hurricanes, fires, and earthquakes they are always there. They operate 113 adult rehabilitation centers with 11,000 residents. Their service centers care for over three million people a year, mostly transients in need of food, clothing, and shelter. They have extensive ministries to prisoners, alcoholics, drug addicts, and AIDS victims. Each year some 23 million attend their worship services, which are simple, informal, and evangelical. Theirs is a simple creed centered in loyalty to Jesus Christ as Savior. They are vigorously evangelistic and gain thousands of converts yearly, mostly among the down and out.

When General Eva Burrows was asked what her Army was doing for AIDS victims, she said that this crisis had been made number one on their agenda. She noted that in some African countries one in every 10 persons is afflicted with this disease, and that she has told her officers, "People will be coming to us for help. Let us not be judgmental. Let us love and help them."

This well describes the spirit of the Salvation Army. They do not judge people, they serve them! Longtime readers of this journal may remember an article I did on "They Went Back to the Salvation Army" (January 1968) in which I told of a Salvationist couple that we had converted to the Church of Christ, people I knew personally while I was at Harvard. They liked our doctrine and believed they had found some new truths, but they could not bear an atmosphere that judged people more than it served people. So they returned to their first love of "people helping people." But this is an indictment against all traditional churches who are more concerned for promoting their own interests than in giving themselves to the need of others. I recently listened to a tape of one of my old Harvard profs, Krister Stendahl, who said that the traditional churches liked the Salvation Army because it ministers to the people that they don't want to mess with. We don't have to be bothered with "those kind of people," he said, for we can send them to the Salvation Army! We talk about love while they practice it!

While there is no Army center (church) in my hometown of Denton, there is a service committee that makes pickups of donations for the poor. But there is lots to see when one visits the impressive facilities in Dallas, which show how progressive they have been in recent years. There are eight community centers throughout the city, which also serve as churches, including the massive $15 million Carr P. Collins Social Service Center, which is their largest facility. It offers nine specialized services: material aid, accommodation, detoxification unit and alcoholism therapy, child care, family violence victims' shelter, pre-release unit for both men and women prisoners. Its budget for 1987 was over $10 million. That is the Dallas center only. While I visited this facility I was not permitted to visit the Adult Rehabilitation Center for drug and alcoholic abuse, for the patient's identity is protected by law.

When other churches show some concern that their facilities are used only a few hours a week, they could take a lesson from The Salvation Army, for when it builds a chapel (their term) it builds a service center for the needy around it!

Since the Army is a poor man's church one may wonder where they get all their money. Most of it comes from non-members who believe in the work they do. They are also aided by thousands of "volunteers" who, while not members of their church, serve in their various ministries. Community leaders from various churches serve on their Advisory Board, including some from the Church of Christ. The Army is an excellent example of Christian unity at work. They draw no doctrinal lines and emphasize unity in service to needy people. They even have the image of not being a denomination, their non-church name lending to this.

Many people think they are only a service organization and not a church. But they are a church with eleven articles of faith that are typically evangelical Protestant, though they practice neither baptism nor Communion in any form. This may be their most serious weakness, being an unbaptized, non-communing church while claiming the Bible as their rule

of faith and practice. They, along with the Quakers, are the only churches in Christendom that reject these ordinances. They have a dedication service for children, but without baptism. Members are accepted by a profession of faith in Christ. They have three types of membership: officers, soldiers, and adherents. The first two are expected to accept their creedal statement, while adherents are described as "persons of good standing and character who by attendance and financial support consider The Salvation Army to be their place of worship." They are so dedicated to helping the oppressed and so free of sectarianism that people of all faiths or no faith at all are pleased to donate to their efforts.

One of the most impressive facts about the Salvationists is that during World War II they operated 3,000 service units for the armed forces, and they led in the formation of the USO. I am also impressed that they have 4,600 centers in India, including a full service hospital with 50 buildings, and this in one of the most poverty-stricken nations in the world. Oddly enough, in Paris they maintain a barge on the River Seine to provide food and shelter for the homeless. The Army told its story some years back in a Rose Bowl parade, the theme of which was "Life's Greatest Adventure." Their float, which was modest in comparison to its elegant competitors, featured the theme that "To Love the Unloved" is life's greatest adventure.

Their Mission Statement says that the motivation of the Army is "love of God and a practical concern for the needs of humanity." It refers also to "spiritual and moral regeneration and physical rehabilitation of all persons in need regardless of race, color, creed, sex or age." In a recent interview General Burrows was asked what word she had for those under her command. She replied, "My challenge to them is to know Christ, to live Christ, and to make Christ's teaching the guideline for their lives. We don't have to struggle to be what Christ wants us to be if we allow the Holy Spirit to indwell us. He gives us power to live that kind of life." She went on to challenge her people to think beyond themselves to the whole world. She said her motto is "Christ for the world," and she urged them to work and pray together to bring Christ's kingdom to this world.

I am sometimes asked of all the churches I have visited which one would I join if I left the Church of Christ. Well, I am not going to leave the Church of Christ, and if I were to be kicked out I would be back the next day trying to get them to take me back. But if I had to leave my own church I would be pleased to work with the Salvation Army as an adherent member. My reason for this is that one doesn't have to leave his own church or compromise any conviction he holds in order to work with the Army in serving others. Besides, it would be something else taking orders from a woman general! Working together in the name of Christ in order to alleviate human suffering, regardless of denominational loyalties — isn't that where Christian unity can at least begin? — *the Editor*

(This ends my 20-part series on visits to churches, which began in January 1988. From the experience as a whole I draw two conclusions: First, we all have far more in common than we have been willing to acknowledge; second, in spite of differences we all have a great deal to learn from each other. We can make no serious claim to be interested in unity among Christians if we continue to have little or nothing to do with each other. In the January 1990 issue I will begin a new series on some of the reformers of the church through the centuries, well known and lesser known, which I believe you will appreciate and find compatible with this series that ends.)

The Salvation Army is comprised of thousands of people from all walks of life, working toward common goals: preaching the Gospel, spreading Christian truths, providing basic human needs such as food, clothing and shelter, and promoting spiritual, moral and physical well-being. There are many ways in which devoted people become involved and some eventually become members of the Army. *The Salvation Army brochure.*

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IS BIBLICAL ADVICE ALWAYS RIGHT?

Cecil Hook

If I were as astute as Gamaliel, I would be too wise to question his judgments. But this denser mind is brash enough to challenge his applauded advice.

The Jewish council wanted to kill the apostles whom they had arrested (Acts 5:33-39). Gamaliel, a respected teacher of the law, cooled the members by advice to "keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this undertaking is of men, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!"

His cool-headed wisdom has been praised generally. But is a non-intervention policy wise in meeting the issues around us? Are we to leave problems alone to test by time whether they are of God or man by their success or failure? Is it true that all the unholy undertakings of men fail? Was it best not to oppose Mohammed, Hitler, and Stalin? And what of fighting against

the liquor industry, the drug traffic, or the invading army? To say that God will take care of evil men in the judgment does not take care of the present. And that is not what Gamaliel had in mind.

Because a condition continues unabated does not mean that it is the work or will of God. We can hardly accept that the death of masses by starvation or disease or that people die in sin is God's will. When we work to prevent or alleviate these, we are not opposing God. Who will advise a neutral policy like Gamaliel proposed?

For disciples to explain some tragedy by shrugging, "It was just the will of God," seems very inadequate.

I know that some of my questions lead off in the direction of skepticism. Should we do what God could do but does not do? How responsible am I for feeding the starving in Ethiopia or Cambodia? God knows that they are starving and he could give them rain and crops, or even send manna. Must innocent people suffer due to my lack of concern or my non-involvement like Gamaliel advised? I help some, but how much does God expect of me? Should I sell my second car order to intervene?

Maybe we need another Gamaliel to give us the answers. *—1350 Huisache, New Braunfels, Tx. 78130*

Jesus made us free. Paul is the great champion of our freedom, sounding a call for freedom, defending it, and giving a challenge to all who are free. "For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another" (Gal. 5:13). Paul would have us to follow the Spirit rather than a code of laws so we will respond to an internal control instead of an external one. The spirit works through our intelligence and understanding in guiding us. Cecil Hook, *Free as Sons,* p.2.

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OUR CHANGING WORLD

My recent illness, reported in this column, led to tests that eventuated in a diagnosis of prostate cancer, which is believed to be confined to a small area. A bone scan revealed that the cancer has not spread. Since there is some uncertainty about the diagnosis, I expect to get a second (or third) opinion from a noted urologist in Houston in early December, who, if the diagnosis is con-firmed, will perform a prostatectomy a few weeks later. The prognosis is thought to be good. The delay is to allow me to supply my own blood for the surgery. I am feeling great and run two miles most mornings. When I kidded my Denton urologist that I might ignore the diagnosis and go on running through life, he said that even at 70 I might be able to do that and live 20 more years and die of something else, but then again I might be dead in six months. A dear friend of mine in our Denton church, who is the pathologist that made my diagnosis, says he has done many autopsies on men in their 80's and 90's who had prostate cancer for many years but who died of something else. But still he advised surgery. While I pondered the options, Ouida, who doesn't like the statistics on deaths from prostate cancer in older men, made the decision. I go to Houston! Another close friend, a Denton business man, insists on taking me to Houston for the surgery and seeing me through the initial stage while Ouida cares for Mother Pitts. The lesson in all this is to stay away from specialists and you won't put yourself and others to so much trouble and concern! (Ouida wants me to add that if the next issue or two is late, or does not arrive at all, you'll know why.)

With this issue we complete our 37th year of publication, 31 years as *Restoration Review.* It has been a work of faith and a labor of love. We have made many friends through the years, many of whom we love having never seen. Our theme of The Hope of the Believer will continue through 1990. If the Lord wills, we hope to go at least three more years, with love towards all and malice towards none, which will make for two more bound volumes of two years each. Forty years should be enough for any editor.

A favorite charity for Ouida and me is the American Friends Service Committee, who are experts in helping the dispossessed all around the world and who are very fiscally responsible. Recent word from their office expresses concern for the homeless in our own country: A just world seems out of reach for our homeless population here in the U.S. Three million singles and families spend their nights in cars, shelters, welfare motels, or, on the street. As winter approaches, the need for help and attention to the homeless is critical." This Quaker organization is making a concerted effort to help alleviate this problem, such as recently opening a shelter for women and children in Boston. If you are interested in learning more about them, their address is Box 13885, Philadelphia 19178-3885.

In Richardson, Texas, which is part of Greater Dallas, two Disciples of Christ congregations, one Independent Christian Church, and the Richardson East Church of Christ joined together in a Thanksgiving service. The last named also served a free Thanksgiving dinner for all who would be their guests.

In Ontario, Oregon a Christian Church (Independent) and a Church of Christ are now doing things together, especially with their young people. Kids from other of our churches in the area were invited, and the effort grew. But in time there was political pressure on the Church of Christ elders to withdraw from the cooperative effort. Many Church of Christ kids had to quit coming. But the Church of Christ elders stood firm, placing unity above politics, and the youth gatherings continued to grow. There were finally efforts involving adults. On a Lord's day the two churches met together with 300 in attendance in the high school auditorium since their own buildings were too small. Mike Trautman and Mike Sublett, ministers of the two churches, tell the story in the *Christian Standard* as a testimonial of what two small churches can do. It can be done!, they say, insisting that unity is easy to preach but more thrilling to practice.

Cornerstone, the inner-city ministry in St Louis often referred to in this column and associated with Carl Ketcherside, is continuing its ministry in spite of the loss of brother Ketcherside. Since there are those that look to this ministry for food, clothing, and Bible studies, the work goes on. They have developed a basketball program for kids in the area. Now that Carl is gone, who raised lots of money for them, they are in need of financial help in order to keep all the pro-grams going. The address is Cornerstone Fellowship, 3258 Ohio, St. Louis 63118.

In *Newslog*, published by the Associated Church Press, theologian Joseph Sittler is quoted as saying that the church would be more true to her purposes if she had a better-developed sense of humor, for a sense of humor is the outer mark of a better under-standing of the world. The church must look to the future, he says, but with a smile, realizing that what the people say they want may not be what they need. Remember, he adds, that what the people wanted was Barabbas instead of Jesus!

Several Churches of Christ in the San Francisco area are helping earthquake victims with food, clothing, and shelter. $250,000 has been received from churches all across the nation. The programs, which include rent vouchers and distribution centers, will continue as long as there is need-Many of the needy are low income, Hispanic migrant workers.

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READERS' EXCHANGE

We continue to find signs that the Holy Spirit is working among us to bring about change and reform. Prejudices are being dissolved and Jesus is being exalted as never before. It is because of your journal and others of like mind and talents that we accredit this welcomed phenomena. May God give you health and strength to continue until your course is faithfully finished and your rewards realized. We work and worship with the Woodmont Church of Christ here in Nashville and we find each day filled with exciting avenues of outreach and potential means of glorifying God and His Christ. *—Alfred and Velma Bradshaw, Nashville, Tn.*

I especially appreciated your article on the friendship of Jesus. While some of your articles leave me scratching my head, I find them refreshing. They make me think of Jesus saying, "What saith the Scriptures, how readest thou?" — *Jim Smith, Morro City, Ca.*

I appreciate your approach. Often I find myself disagreeing with what you say, but that's the great thing about the journal. You freely express ideas without binding them on others and that's refreshing. As a minister in the Church of Christ I became discouraged and ran away to the army, but after a lot of soul searching I have decided to return and face the fire once Uncle Sam releases me. I thank you and the contributors to your journal for encouraging me. Continue to challenge us and show us Jesus. — *APO, San Francisco*

I have been a Church of Christ preacher for about 35 years, but I have recently come to see that I must be a gospel preacher. I have ceased to serve men, and now Jesus is the only master I have. To my knowledge I have not met you, though I did meet Carl Ketcherside back in the 1950's. It is a shame that my preaching peers put so much prejudice in my mind that I have not gone out of my way to meet and talk with you. I am sorry to have wasted so much of my life. Even if every person on earth disagrees with you, you have your own convictions before God. In that I commend you. — *name withheld*

I was delighted to read "Fruit In His Season" by Laurie Hibbett in the July/August *Integrity,* which first appeared in *Restoration Review* back in 1960. Coming from a very legalistic background myself I could identify with the author. *—Frankie Shanks, Poplar Bluff, Mo.*

(The essay referred to, which we published in this journal 30 years ago, is one of the great freedom documents of recent Church of Christ history, and it has been reprinted and xeroxed many times. If you desire a copy, request one from *Integrity,* 1269 Pickwick Place, Flint Mi. 48507. — *Ed.)*

We don't have many thinkers in the Church of Christ in this area, but I can see some change in the last few years. I am hoping and praying that we will become more enlightened. — *Alabama*

Unity: Surprised By Joy

This past summer my wife, Kady, and I, along with other Christians, were privileged to visit the Holy Land. Ours was a diverse group. It consisted of a former minister of the Disciples of Christ who now serves as pastor of a Church of God and several members of his congregation, and a former preacher of the Churches of Christ. There were also Baptists, Pentecostals, a Catholic, and several from the Christian Church. As diverse as we were in our traditions and prejudices we found unity in our common experience.

We were united in our singing of praises to God and in our prayers of thanksgiving for God's grace and the saving power of Jesus. Our daily devotionals were uplifting, joyful, and meaningful, drawing us closer in fellowship and love. We met for Communion in a small upper room in Jerusalem, and the joy we shared can hardly be put into words. We were aware of the presence of Jesus as we remembered his sacrifice and resurrection.

When together we sang, "Because he lives I can face tomorrow," we were made more aware of the importance of keeping Jesus in our hearts and in our lives. We were strengthened and edified.

The trip was an experience we will never forget. It was surely treasured by us all, for we truly shared the joy of unity in Christ. It was a unity based not on opinions or traditions, but on our love for one another and our mutual faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. It was the kind of experience that will influence our lives forever. — *Jim Gregory, 3339 N. Dewey St., Fresno, Ca. 93722*

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BOOK NOTES

K. C. Moser's books continue to be appealing, not only because he was a fore-runner for more open thinking among Churches of Christ, but also because of his insight into the grace of God. *The Gist of Romans* and *The Way of Salvation* are still in print at $6.50 each postpaid.

Leslie G. Thomas was another pioneer for greater freedom among our people, and his story is told in *Recollections of Ninety One Years* by Lila Rogers Newsom. This book is not only important Church of Christ history as reflected in one long, sincere life, but it is good Americana, including reflections on presidential campaigns. $8.00 postpaid.

Leslie Newbigin is always worth reading because of his being an ecumenical statesman for so long. His books are influenced by his passion for unity. *The Light Has Come* is an exposition of the gospel of John, which is more practical than it is technical. Due to his long years as a missionary in India and his knowledge of Hindu culture this book has special relevance to our own culture. $11.50 postpaid.

John Stott's great little book on *What Christ Thinks of the Church* is unfortunately out of print. We were able to get a few of the last copies available. $5.95 postpaid for as long as they last.

It is now a decade old, but it is as relevant as ever. You should read *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* by C. Everett Koop and Francis Schaeffer. Koop, you recall, was until recently surgeon general. In this book he speaks out on abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia as only he can do. This book may shock you, but you will likely be a more sensitive person from reading it. *$6.95* postpaid.

We are still stocking Faith Martin's *Call Me Blessed,* which is an enlightening study of woman's role in the church. $8.95 postpaid.

Three views are held about the nature of hell. It is an everlasting fire of punishment; it is a temporary penitential fire (purgatory); it is a consuming fire of destruction. Edward

Fudge's *The Fire That Consumes* takes the third position, and he presents his case with disarming logic. The chances are he will convince you from the Scriptures that the wicked are not destined to endless punishment in hell, but you should read for yourself. $19.95 postpaid.

Those interested in Restoration history should not neglect one of its greatest princes, David Lipscomb. *Crying In The Wilderness* by Robert E. Hooper is the story of the longtime editor of the *Gospel Advocate* and one of the founders of the Church of Christ in the South. $14.95 postpaid.

I may be biased, but if you are interested in what really happened in Church of Christ / Christian Church beginnings, then read *The Stone-Campbell Movement* by Leroy Garrett. $21.95 postpaid. You may also get this book as a free bonus when you send eight subs for this journal, new or renewal, including your own, at $3.00 each, total $24.00. You have to request the free book.

We will send you 18 back issues of this journal, selected at random by us, for only $3.00. These are mailed once a month with the regular mailing of the paper. Selected back issues are 40 cents each plus postage.

Our new bound volume for 1987-88 entitled *The Sense of Scripture: Studies in Interpretation* is now ready at $12.50 plus postage, $14.00 total. This volume matches the previous volumes. The bound volume 1985-86 is also available at the same price. All seven of our bound volumes, dating back to 1977 are offered at the special price of *$65.00* postpaid.

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